DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 156 248 JC 780 343

AUTHOR Beman, Richard R.; Parsons, Michael H.
TITLE Turning the System Around: College-Corporation Cooperation for Mutual Development.
PUB DATE 14 Jun 78
NOTE 10p.; Paper presented at the International Institute on the Community College (9th, Sarnia, Ontario, June 14, 1978)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Associate Degrees; Community Colleges; Cooperative Programs; *Inplant Programs; Inservice Programs; *Junior Colleges; Management Education; *Middle Management; Participant Satisfaction; Program Evaluation; Program Planning; *School Industry Relationship; *Supervisory Training
IDENTIFIERS Hagerstown Junior College MD

ABSTRACT

In fall 1977, Hagerstown Junior College and the Certain-Teed Corporation initiated a business/industry/college instructional program to upgrade the skills of corporate first-line supervisory personnel and to increase the visibility of the college's associate degree Management program among local business and industry. Fourteen supervisors enrolled in the initial course, Management of Human Resources, conducted in the Certain-Teed plant by a college faculty member. The instructor and the 13 students who completed the course were surveyed regarding their opinions on its success. The instructor felt it had increased both the validity and the visibility of the management program. Of students surveyed, 50% described the course as satisfactory and 50% as more than satisfactory; 92% indicated that course content was helpful to their jobs; 75% were interested in pursuing other college courses and 50% in other in-plant courses; and 67% expressed interest in obtaining a college degree. The project experience suggested a generalized model adaptable to the goals and resources of other institutions, which requires that planners recognize and meet their competition for enrollments in terms of cost, quality and timeliness; carefully evaluate resources, identify the customer, sell only what can be delivered, advertise flexibility and publicize successes. (TR)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED156248

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Michael Parsons

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

TURNING THE SYSTEM AROUND:
COLLEGE-CORPORATION COOPERATION
FOR MUTUAL DEVELOPMENT

A Paper Commissioned for the
9th International Institute
on the Community College

Lambton College
Sarnia, Ontario

June 14, 1978

Richard R. Beman, M.S.M.
Personnel & Safety Manager
Certain-Teed Corporation

Michael H. Parsons, Ed.D.
Associate Dean - Instructional Affairs
Hagerstown Junior College

JC 780 343

Introduction

Much recent research has been devoted to the resurgence of occupational education in the community college.[1] Close examination of the data reveals a rather traditional pattern. Occupational students, whether they are young, old, male, female, part or full time, take courses on the community college campus.[2] Very rarely are linkages formed between the classroom and the world of work.

Yet, an author writing for the Community and Junior College Journal asserts that "Career Education is needed to break down the wall that separates what needs to be learned into the theoretical and the practical, the liberal and the applied. . . . This dichotomy has no basis in reality."[3] A need exists to examine the benefits that accrue to the community college and the business/industry community.

Gollattscheck et. al. suggest that involving the college and local business and industry in cooperating off-campus instruction is productive. Such programs will attract students who might not come to the campus. Further, the learning experiences obtained in the business or industry "are likely to be more directly related to student and (business/industry) needs than the typical learning experiences gained on campus."[4] What processes are involved in establishing business/industry/college cooperating instruction?

Hagerstown Junior College and Certain-Teed Corporation initiated such a program in the Fall of 1977. The rationale for such an

endeavor was a mutual need. Certain-Teed identified a need to upgrade the skills of its first-line supervisory personnel. The college was concerned that its associate degree Management program lacked visibility with its business/industry target population. A successful cooperating program would address both needs.

The initial course, Management of Human Resources, was offered during the Fall, 1977, semester. Fourteen first-line supervisors enrolled; thirteen completed the course. Classes were conducted in one of the plant's employee canteens. Attendance was above average; student achievement was comparable with similar courses offered on campus. The instructor, drawn from the college's regular faculty, accepted the teaching environment and was satisfied that the course met existing college credit standards. What were the results of the project?

Project Assessment

The preceding paragraph detailed the operational dynamics that were used to deliver the course. Now it becomes germane to ascertain what impact the project had.

There are two aspects of project assessment. The first is the benefit accruing to the college. The faculty member who taught the course suggested that the visibility of the college within the industry provided a degree of validity for the management program that it did not possess previously. The validity is "transferable" in that other first-line supervisory personnel recognize that "in-plant" delivery of the management program can be congruent with their needs.

The second aspect of project assessment is evaluation of student reaction to the course. A survey of student opinion was administered near the end of the course. The responses provide useful insights into the perceived benefits of the experience.

The students were asked to rate the quality of instruction; 50% listed it as satisfactory and 50% described it as more than satisfactory. 92% of the students indicated that course content was helpful in their job. 75% stated that they would be interested in pursuing other college courses. The validity of the degree is suggested by a YES response of 67% to the question, "Are you interested in obtaining a college degree?" 50% of the students were interested in taking another in-plant course. The questionnaire introduced several delivery systems for taking courses. It is revealing to note that 34% of the students were interested in taking a course offered via educational television. Finally, the core courses of the Management program were listed on the questionnaire. The students were asked to prioritize their preference for a second course. The data were gathered as a basis for planning future cooperation between the college and the corporation.

In essence, assessment of the course from the college and corporation perspective validates the mutuality of benefit. As Wilson indicates, "Fortunately, times are changing. . . . we are trying to rejoin education with people and their enterprises."[5] The HJC - Certain-Teed model represents a productive example of the process. What did the experience result in?

Some Simple Instructions

A serious ideological barrier often exists between the campus and the business community. The strategic plan by the college and its tactical execution will determine whether these barriers will be reinforced or weakened. Our experience suggests a generalized model which can be adapted to the goals and resources of a specific institution. Many of these points may seem obvious until an attempt is made to apply them, and the realization will come that applying this outline requires both intense effort and a degree of creativity which are not commonplace.

1. Recognize that you are selling a product which must meet competition in terms of cost, quality, and timeliness of delivery. Your integrity will not be soiled if you meet your commitments honorably. The consumer will evaluate your performance in the same way as he does a janitorial service. He will probably encourage or discourage other members of the business community with quite reasonable objectivity.
2. Evaluate your resources carefully. The fact that you have a cost accounting course in your catalogue does not mean that you can offer a company service in upgrading the competencies of its accounting staff. The fact that you do not offer such a course does not mean that the service cannot be offered. It is quite possible that arranging a

brief dialogue between an instructor and the appropriate individual in the corporation will result in a meaningful comparison of needs and a determination of the ability of the college to fulfill them.

3. Identify the person who will make the buying decision. This is often difficult because the person may be organizationally quite isolated from the people who feel the need most strongly. Extensive and diplomatic probing may be necessary. One way to approach this is to encourage key faculty members to be active in their professional organizations. Most communities large enough to have a college also have chapters of engineering, accounting, personnel, and other associations. The most elementary kind of financial incentive would be to pay the annual membership expenses for faculty, if this is not already done. Adjunct faculty will also be a good source of such information.

4. Sell only what you can deliver. A college is faced with a problem which successful consultants deal with constantly. If the client's needs, as he perceives them, are beyond the competencies of your faculty, you have essentially two options. You can cheerfully admit that you cannot provide the service. Or, you can suggest, persuasively, that the client redefine his needs so that you can meet them competently.

5. Advertise your flexibility. If the framework of your institutional policies gives you latitude in such items as

choice of instructional materials, changes to course outlines, or modification of attendance policies, make these known to prospective clients. A corollary of equal importance is to make these areas known to your faculty, who might otherwise discourage potential clients.

6. Publicize your successes. Productive cooperation between colleges and the business world should be newsworthy because of its relative rarity. Opportunities to describe these experiences at professional meetings should be sought.

In summary, recognize the practical worth of what you are doing. You are not venturing into the world of profit orientation as mendicants; you are vendors of a service which is valuable and usually furnished in-house only by major corporations. It is also likely to exceed in quality, at a much lower cost, the services that consultants can offer.

The first phase of the Certain-Teed - HJC project is completed. What ventures are planned in the future?

Conclusions: Several Future Directions

There are three activities which emanate from the project. First, the in-plant course delivery will be continued. Using data derived from the student questionnaire, a course has been selected - Management Planning and Decision Making. An appropriate instructor is being sought, then the project will enter phase two. The second activity is the expansion of the project to other areas of the corporation. Planning is under way to deliver electrical engineering

technology courses to the plant's cadre of electricians. The model developed with first-line supervisors seems to be equally applicable in a technological setting. The third activity expands the project beyond a single corporation. A series of dissemination activities have been initiated to determine whether other businesses and industries in the college's service area would be responsive to in-plant education. Hopefully, the cooperation between Certain-Teed and HJC can be expanded to include other businesses and industries.

This project is representative of a burgeoning movement abroad in America. Individuals in society are recognizing the need for opportunities to renew themselves in order to cope more effectively with their daily responsibilities. They are demanding that these opportunities be made available. Corporations recognize the need to develop their human resources. The community college is an ideal institution to respond to both needs. As Gollattscheck indicates, "Fundamentally (the college) advocates that the student assume responsibility for his own education and that his personal development be unrestricted by traditional (constraints)."[6] The cooperation displayed in the Certain-Teed - Hagerstown Junior College project indicates that the heuristic ideal described by Gollattscheck et. al. can become real.

REFERENCES

1. John Lombardi. Resurgence of Occupational Education (Los Angeles: ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges, University of California, Topical Paper Number 65, January, 1978).

2. Norman C. Harris and John F. Grede. Career Education in Colleges (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1977) pp. 34-41.

3. Richard E. Wilson. "Career Education Can Bring Down the Walls," Community and Junior College Journal. Vol. 48, No. 8 (May, 1978) p. 5.

4. James F. Gollattscheck, et. al. College Leadership for Community Renewal (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1976) p. 46.

5. Wilson, Op. Cit., p. 4.

6. Gollattscheck, et. al. Op. Cit., p. 100.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

AUG 4 1978

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGES